

LOCAL SERVICES

Aerials, Satellites, Burglar Alarms	Craig Jones	0121 744 9899
Building Services	Mr J Hewitt	E.703116
Caravan Servicing	Mr R C Ward	E.703163
Carpenter	A Lloyd	E.703169
Carpet and Upholstery Restoration	P J Bellanger	E.702070
Carpet Fitter	Mr W Clare	E.702703
Chart'd Accountant, Financial Services	Peter Wilcox	E.703250
Electrical Contractor	Tony Pearce	E.702117
Plumbing and Heating	Mr A Warr	E.702603
Roofing, UPVC Fascias etc, Dbl Glazing	Mr J Stubbs	E.702158
Solicitor	G M Fairfax	E.702688

ORGANISATIONS IN CHESWICK GREEN

Allotment Association	Terry Light	E.702109
Boys Brigade	Dianne Roberts	E.702926
Brownies	Val Sperry	E.703268
CGRA Chairman	John Wood	E.702085
CGRA Tote Organiser	Denise Swain	E.702500
Cheswick Green News Editor	Stan Proudfoot	E.702907
Cheswick Green Toddlers	Kate O'Sullivan	E.703415
Childminders co-ordinator	Helen Gardner	E.703791
Cubs	Joyce Brewster	E.702134
Family Church	Beverley Prater	E.702030
	Rev Geoff Dunbar	E.703267
Girl Guides	Val Sperry	E.703268
National Women's Register	Ursula Ison	E.702787
Playgroup	Sue Luckett	E.703133
Rainbows	Val Sperry	E.703268
Save The Children	Jenny Cockcroft	E.703091
St Johns Ambulance Cadets	Div Supt Cleveley	0121 708 0514
School Association	Helen Gardner	E.703791
Scouts, Salter Street	Roger Smith	0121 745 1135
Slimming Club	Ruth Hubble	E.702910
Thursday Club	Gwen Fincham	E.702127
Two's Club	Marion Burrows	E.702066
Vicar, St Patricks	Rev Chris Race	E.702579
Village Hall Booking Clerk	Ruth Stanton	E.703293
Wine Club	Chris Kenyon	E.703138
Womens Institute	Cath Harris	0121 744 1336

Cheswick Green News

Magazine of Cheswick Green Residents Association

October 1W4

THE WIDENING OF THE M42: CONTENTIOUS PROPOSALS

The proposals to widen a local stretch of the M42 Motorway, which were announced by the Highways Agency in mid-summer, have been met with mixed reactions. Some individuals who are already being inconvenienced by delays on the stretch in question, and who probably do not live within the "pollution corridor", have welcomed the plans. Others, whilst acknowledging the need for action, are less certain that these particular proposals will have the desired effect - and a third group is firmly convinced that the Highways Agency has got it wrong.

The remit of the Highways Agency is to keep the traffic flowing. Their proposed solution, to widen the motorway to five lanes in each direction from Junction 2 to Junction 7, is not acceptable to most of the local councils concerned. (At the time of writing, Solihull MBC had not made up its mind.) Neither is it acceptable to this Association.

Those who visited one of the very professional exhibitions given by the Agency were able to see detailed plans of what is being proposed and were given glossy publications which explained the concepts of symmetrical, asymmetrical and parallel widening of motorways - and which of these methods is being advocated for the various sections of the M42. But the

presentations did not even mention any alternative solutions to the problem. Furthermore, a preliminary analysis of the proposals revealed some disturbing facts: for example, the projections of traffic growth, used to justify the scheme, may be too high - particularly in the light of the government's current initiatives regarding the electronic tagging of vehicles to permit the introduction of motorway-tolls; also, it appears that there has been no consideration of the impact that the scheme will have on the feeder roads - any resulting problems will have to be rectified later.

In their letter of objection to the scheme, this Association argued, "The proposed widening will have a major detrimental environmental impact on

the area. The region in the proximity of Junction 4 has, in recent years, seen a significant housing development and further housing and business park development is planned for the future; the proposed parallel widening of the M42 to the east of Solihull will encroach still further on the countryside significantly reducing the rural amenity value of the area.

"As a result of the development referred to above, local feeder roads already encounter heavy traffic and the extra traffic generated by the motorway widening is likely to cause significant congestion on these roads. This will increase local journey times and pollution and will impact on road safety.

"Widening of the motorway is likely to result in an increase in average vehicle speeds on the motorway with an attendant increase in fuel consumption and vehicle operating costs and therefore, when considered with the likely increase in congestion on the feeder roads, we do not believe that the cost benefit analysis would find in favour of widening.

"We are also concerned over the environmental impact of the proposed lighting for the motorway. Even with 'full cut-off lighting we believe the lighting scheme, columns by day and light by night, will be environmentally intrusive.

"Noise levels from the motorway are already intrusive at considerable distances from the motorway and the increased traffic levels and speeds likely to result from the widening will exacerbate this problem.

"On a more fundamental basis, we do not see the logic behind the widening of this stretch of motorway as current congestion, principally around Junction 5, tends to be caused by the limitation of the junction(s) and ability of vehicles to gain access to the NEC sufficiently rapidly, rather than by any limit in capacity of the main motorway carriageway.

"Also, increased traffic resulting from the widening of the section between Junctions 2 and 7 is likely to cause congestion problems at the bottlenecks which will result west of Junction 2 and on the two lane section of the M42/A42 to the north - which the proposed five lane carriageways will feed!

"In summary, we believe that widening of the motorway is both unnecessary and environmentally unacceptable and object most strongly to the proposals.

"Rather than pursuing the current scheme we would request that the high noise levels which result from the existing concrete surfaced 2x3 lane motorway are reduced by resurfacing with a quieter surface."

As part of their decision making process, Solihull MBC held a consultation meeting with local representatives on 13 September. CGRA re-stated their objections at that meeting, and subsequently copied then-letter of objection, (reproduced above), to the Acting Joint Director of Technical Services. In the covering letter, comment was made on particular measures which would avoid the need to widen the motorway and

which had been proposed at the meeting. That letter read:

"We would support additional schemes to improve access to and from the NEC and the introduction of other urban motorway traffic management techniques to improve traffic flow on the existing carriageways. However we would not be in favour of closing any of the existing junctions which we feel would put undue pressure on the feeder roads to the remaining junctions."

The Green Belt Defenders also are unhappy with the Highways Agency's proposals. At a special meeting, it was unanimously agreed that the Group would coordinate a campaign to oppose the principle of widening the M42. Their campaign commenced with the organisation of the delivery of a Highways Agency Consultation Form to each of the 30,000 households likely to be affected and which fall within the umbrella of the organisation. It was further agreed that The Green Belt Defenders would not advise the householders on whether they should support, or object to, the proposals.

Thus, whether we, as individuals, are in favour of the proposals or not, we were given a timely reminder to comment on them. As with any major building project, it must never be assumed that the "experts" will have got it right.

There is no doubt that opinions will differ. Neither is there any doubt that when the decisions are eventually made, it will be too late to complain.[]

VILLAGE FETE REPORT 1994

The weather was exceedingly kind to Cheswick Green and I still cannot believe how all those storm clouds managed to pass us by. The Fete was more successful this year with a profit of over £200 and I hope a "fun-day" was had by all.

The Residents Association would like to thank their sponsors, Crossroads Garage for their generous donation, and also the Boys Brigade and Brownies who opened the proceedings for us with their Band.

1995 will be the 25th Anniversary of the new village at Cheswick Green, so if anyone has any ideas on a theme for next year's fete please let me know.

DENISE SWAIN

THE TOTE

The July issue of The Cheswick Green News carried an article about the Tote and asked for volunteers to help collect the stake money. There are still vacancies: if you can help the Association in this way please contact Denise Swain on E.702500

Recent Winners:

15-40	Owen	£35.70
15-9	Moss	£14.87
16-38	Copland	£8.93
2-13	Marshall	£35.64
19-1	Moss	£14.87
26-21	Marshall	£8.91

OUR POLICE: SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

There is little doubt that the police force is an essential part of our community - we all take some comfort from the knowledge that there is an organisation with the primary task of preventing and detecting crime. But are we satisfied with the level of service provided? Are the police doing a good job?

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) recently published a "factsheet" which attempts to answer some of the major criticisms currently being levelled, and which highlights some of their concerns regarding changes to the structure and role of the force being proposed by government.

Over the past year there has been considerable upheaval, and now a Home Office review of police tasks is taking place. In the coming months the face of policing could change. It is important that we all know what is happening.

The idea of the review is to produce a list of essential "core" police tasks and to decide which duties might be done by others. The ACPO believes that the review is being driven by the desire to save money and that the police may be forced to withdraw from their social service role - they might, for example, have to give up such functions as offering crime prevention advice or visiting schools. It is argued that a fundamental principle of British policing is that it is done with the

consent and trust of the community, and this can be achieved because the duties of the British police go beyond law enforcement. Each police force tries to address the specific concerns of its area, and this may involve performing many roles: the police are not just there when the law is broken.

The ACPO recognises that some jobs could, and should, be relinquished but states that all changes require careful thought. It is their opinion that Britain's community policing style should not be jeopardised by privatising or abandoning duties that keep the force close to the community.

Are police standards falling and the public losing faith? Not according to the "factsheet". A recent survey found that 75% of the public were very, or fairly, satisfied with the policing service.

Are the police losing the battle against crime? It appears not. British police are amongst the best in the world at solving serious crimes: there is a 94% detection rate for murder, 76% for violence against the person, and 74% for sexual offences.

Do the police spend too much time harassing innocent motorists? The ACPO points out that despite a 44% increase in traffic volume between 1982 and 1992, fatal and serious accidents were reduced by 37%. Tragically, though, 3769 people were

still killed on English and Welsh roads in 1992. For each person who died through homicide, more than 5 were killed on the roads. Thus, the ACPO feels that it can justify road safety as a high priority. There are fewer deaths on our roads each year than in most other countries.

Why don't we see more bobbies on the beat? It is fact that, between 1982 and 1992, the number of police officers in England and Wales was increased by 6%. However, to set against this, in the same period reported crime went up by 74%, 999 calls rose by 70%, traffic volume increased by 44%, and the paperwork demanded by the criminal justice system became an increasing burden - paperwork consumes up to 12% of the time officers spend dealing with crime. The police are making every effort to put more officers on patrol by reducing the paperwork burden on them and by increasing the ratio of junior to senior officers.

So, how can the police become more effective? From next April, chief constables will be given fixed budgets and greater freedom to manage their finances, to fix staffing levels according to local needs, to use police officers and civilians more effectively, and to find more cost effective ways of operating.

The ACPO believes that British policing is the best in the world and, in deciding the way the police service operates and responds to the

Government's drive for cost effectiveness, it is important that the values and characteristics which lie at the heart of British policing are not lost.

Closer to home, the West Midlands Police have issued a booklet entitled "Your Service: Our Standards". The booklet, copies of which can be obtained from Solihull Police Station, states the service aims of the Force, specifies the Force's commitments, and contains some interesting statistics. For example:

- * over 85,000 crimes were detected in the West Midlands last year,
- * 83 % of officers are on operational duties,
- * the Force responds to an average of 35 emergency calls every hour,
- * 75% of serious assaults are detected. Most assaults occur late at night outside licensed premises, and most victims are young men,
- * elderly people are the least likely to become victims of crime,
- * 90% of car thefts are committed by opportunists - 20% of drivers do not lock their doors or secure their windows,
- * in 30% of house burglaries, windows and doors have been left open.

Every police area has a Consultative Committee which meets regularly with local senior officers to discuss the policing of their area and any matters of concern. CGRA is represented on the Committee for this area by Stan Proudfoot (E.702907). []

Your Committee at work....

Extracts on selected topics from the minutes of recent meetings

The Play Area

[July] Despite promises (via HHPC) by the manufacturer, the frog-springer has not yet been replaced. CGRA to approach Levercrest direct.

[August] Levercrest have promised to replace the frog-springer within "a couple of weeks". A safety report, commissioned by HHPC, has identified the frog-springer as being in a dangerous condition. HHPC have notified Levercrest in writing, and have requested that the problem be rectified within 7 days.

[September] The frog-springer has been repaired. The motorbike-springer has been vandalised: for reasons of safety it has been removed from its base and put into storage.

The National Playing Fields Association are to carry out a safety survey on behalf of HHPC, who will then take up any issues with Levercrest. In the meantime, CGRA will not deal with Levercrest direct.

The Football Pitch

[July] The Chairman had received several telephone calls complaining about footballs entering local gardens. He had removed the goal-posts, but had re-instated them after a week. Various options to reduce the problem were considered. It was agreed that the goal-posts should be moved closer to the shrub beds at the river end, and the pitch shortened.

[September] Two residents attended

the meeting to represent those being affected by damage/trespass associated with footballs. It was agreed that the pitch would be shortened and the situation monitored. If the problem persisted, consideration would be given to the erection of netting.

Playing field drainage

[August] HHPC had received a professional report on the requirements to improve drainage and agreed that work should proceed without delay. CGRA have been asked for a contribution towards the cost. It was agreed that CGRA would not contribute.

[September] It is understood that the work will be carried out "within the next few weeks".

Village Hall

[July] The problems with the central heating were caused by the cracking of pipes encased in concrete. Rectification work is in hand.

[September] The central heating system is now working correctly. There is a leak in the roof, but the guarantee period has expired. An inspection is to be made by an engineer from SMBC.

Waste recycling

[August] The private recycling company will consider providing a service to Cheswick Green if, and when, they expand their business.

Resignation

[August] Mike Cooper has resigned from the Committee for personal reasons.

Speeding Vehicles

[September] Reports that it is not uncommon for vehicles to be driven at dangerous speeds down Coppice Walk are to be raised with SMBC and action requested.

Bus Shelters

[September] In response to the suggestion from a resident (which was published in the July issue of this Magazine), it was agreed that a letter would be written to Centro requesting that a bus shelter be sited at the bus stop opposite to the shops, and also asking for seating at the shelter on Cheswick Way by the footpath to Saxonwood Road.

NEWS FROM THE SURGERY

At last we are in sight of occupation of our new premises! I am now in the happy position of choosing colour schemes and equipment to complete the surgery to the highest possible standard we can achieve. Scheduled "opening for business" of the building will be Monday 7 November (only one week later than expected), providing that there are no last-minute problems for the contractor. We shall be having an "Open Day" for anyone who wishes to be nosey, whether patients or not, on Sunday 13 November from 2-5pm. I do hope you will take the opportunity to meet me and my staff in our new surroundings.

An important feature of the new service we shall be offering is the Well-Baby/Child Health/Antenatal clinic which will be held every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month from 2-3.30pm. Our new Health Visitor, Mrs Helen Fitzpatrick, will be present to see any parent and under-5 who wishes to attend, on a "drop-in" basis. Mothers will be able to weigh their

babies and discuss with Helen any health queries. I shall be present, by appointment, to perform 6-week and 39-month checks, and also to see routine ante- and postnatal mothers. After Christmas it is anticipated we shall also have the Practice Nurse in attendance, so that routine childhood vaccinations can also be given at the same surgery visit. We sincerely hope that this will prove to be a valuable service for the local community.

A combined asthma and diabetes clinic is scheduled to be run on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month- starting soon after we open. Details to follow.

On an annual reminder basis, Flu' vaccinations will be available from mid-October for high risk groups including asthmatics, diabetics, over 75's, heart and chest sufferers, kidney patients and health workers. Please enquire at reception for details of the special clinics available.

DR JANET LEESE

CHESWICK GREEN AS IT WAS

I recently borrowed a complete set of CGRA Newsletters, dating back to the beginning in 1971, and I found them to be extremely interesting reading - especially as I am a comparative newcomer to Cheswick Green with only 3.5 years standing. It was fascinating to note the way things were in the Village a little over 20 years ago when compared with today.

Today, we enjoy a twenty minute bus service but in 1971 it was a once a week service (No 179) which ran to Solihull on Tuesday mornings returning at mid-day. There was much jubilation when, in December 1972, the service was increased to twice weekly, to run on Tuesdays and Fridays.

During the early part of the development of Cheswick Green, when the village was smaller, a great community spirit was much in evidence in the organisation of dances and socials to raise money for financing the facilities that are today taken for granted. Even the acquisition of the public call box outside the Post Office was not achieved without a struggle because the then Birmingham Telephone Manager said that a public call office would be uneconomical. However, in the early 70's it became necessary to provide a new telephone exchange in addition to that existing at Earlswood due to the increasing number of telephone subscribers. This temporary exchange was given the name "Rowells" which is the name of the large white house in Creynolds Lane opposite to the junction with Cheswick Way. One wonders how and why this name came to be chosen.

Subscription to the Residents Association in the early 1970's was 25p and the Magazine was more or less monthly. Cooking recipes were often included in the Magazine as was children's poetry.

It was interesting to see that discounts were available from certain local firms on production of one's Residents Association Membership card.

Local Government was different: Cheswick Green came under Warwickshire County Council and Stratford RDC until local government restructuring in April 1974 brought it under Solihull.

In 1973 the number of homes built reached 500 and the village could then officially be adopted by a local authority. At that time, the smell from the sewage plant near Coppice Walk was giving cause for complaint but this problem was remedied when Cheswick Green was put on the Solihull main drainage system and the sewage system was demolished.

It would seem that litter, and the problem of dog-fouling, was just as bad 20 years ago as it is today. Vandalism was just as rife then as now, in fact I think more so. In 1974 there were problems with the football pitch becoming waterlogged, and problems with car-parking outside the school; there were adverse comments about people using cars for short journeys to and from school, and about cars being left outside homes rather than being put into the garages. Some things never change!

G NALL

CHESWICK GREEN TWO'S CLUB

WHAT ARE WE?

Two's Club is a play session for children aged 18-30 months where they are accompanied by a parent or carer. Our aims are to encourage independence and sociability through play, by helping children to develop their pre-playgroup skills and gain confidence in the Village Hall environment which will ease their transition to the greater independence of playgroup.

WE ARE ALL GROWN UP NOW!

Over the summer Two's Club took its first tentative steps on its own!

We are now operating independently of Cheswick Green Playgroup. We are very grateful to them for the support they have given over the past few years in getting the Group up and running. They have been particularly generous in setting us up with donations of basic equipment for this new year under our new status. We still have to store our "stuff" in their cupboards which are already packed with a precision any sergeant-major would be proud of! I am sure that we

are a nuisance to them but they are very patient with us. We have written to ask if there will be any cupboard space available to us once the Doctor has moved out. Until then, there are some larger toys which cannot be used because we have no place to store them.

Over the summer we made a toy appeal to boost our equipment now that we are independent. Can YOU help? We are looking for toys that will provide some educational value for children (aged 18-30 months). Are you about to clear out your cupboards ready for the next influx at Christmas? We have already received some excellent donations and would like to say a big Thank You to all those who have responded. If you can offer anything, either bring it down to our sessions or telephone Ruth on E.702910.

IF YOU HAVE A CHILD WHO IS 18-30 MONTHS OLD, COME ALONG AND JOIN THE FUN ON MONDAYS BETWEEN 1.30-3pm IN THE VILLAGE HALL.

NEEDED....TWO'S CLUB LEADER

HOURS 1.30-3pm, MONDAYS (TERM TIME ONLY)....PAID POST!

At Christmas, our current leader is retiring and we shall need someone to take over. From experience, we have found that the group really needs to be lead by someone who does not have any responsibility for a child in the group. Under these circumstances it would not be hard work and would require only a little occasional work outside session hours.

Interested? Want to know more? Then phone Ruth on E.702910.

CAN YOU HELP?

Can anyone please help with information relating to this enquiry about Cheswick Green's recent history?

It is well known that, during the 1950's and 1960's, before the development of the "Village of the Seventies", Cheswick Green was a community of wood and corrugated iron shacks and bungalows. These were a legacy from the Second World War when people came out of Birmingham to escape the bombing and to set up homes in this area. In the 1950/60's there were many "characters" who lived in these timber and iron structures and one was a Mr Phipps. His home was situated where the kitchen of Cheswick Green School now stands. He was described as an artist of considerable talent, and I believe he had several frieze paintings on the walls of his house. He was also a lay-preacher, preaching at a church in Acocks Green. He died at the end of the 1960's aged 86. This information was supplied by Mr Walter Bond who used to live at 186 Creynolds Lane.

I am interested in obtaining any further information about Mr Phipps, in particular the whereabouts of any of his paintings. If anyone can help me, or knows of someone who might have some useful information, I shall be pleased if they would contact me at 3 Briar Coppice, Cheswick Green, or phone E.703543

GODFREY NALL

THE GRIPE COLUMN**SPEED KILLS**

The title "Speed Kills" is not new, but it is true. And I believe that it is worth repeating because I am becoming increasingly concerned that there is going to be an unnecessary road traffic accident, here, on Cheswick Green.

Perhaps I am getting old and beginning to forget the thrill of fast driving. Or perhaps I am becoming less tolerant of the behaviour of others. Perhaps.... or perhaps not. Whatever the reason, I have recently become aware that vehicles are being driven through our village at speeds which are much more appropriate to a race-track. Coppice Walk is not part of the Silverstone circuit, neither is Cheswick Way part of Brands Hatch. Some drivers might think it looks macho to use them as such but, in my opinion, it most certainly is not. It seems to me that it is foolhardy and dangerous, and demonstrates the behaviour of an immature driver, rather than that of one who is experienced and competent.

So, if you are tempted to put your foot down, please remember the rest of us - and drive at a speed which will give us time to get out of your way!

Name and address supplied

*If you have a pet complaint which you would like to get off your chest, why not write to **The Gripe Column?***

CHESWICK GREEN WI

Our Annual General Meeting is to be held in October, and I hope the members will all attend and vote in a new committee.

We have had a successful year, but would like a few more members so that we could arrange outings. It is difficult to run a coach trip with only 30 people, and new blood into the group would bring new interest, new talent, and more friendship around the village.

When I came here in 1984, I found it difficult to meet people because I had no children to help me to ease my way into the life of the village - and it was only after I went to the WI one evening and was made so very welcome that I really settled down. I then had 24 faces that I knew.

Coming from an area where I had lived for nearly 50 years it was very hard to walk around this village where everyone was a stranger. However, the WI changed all that, and look what happened....

CATHERINE HARRIS
President

CHESWICK GREEN NEWS

The next issue is expected to be published in January (1995). Please let Stan Proudfoot (61 Willow Drive) have any items for inclusion by Friday, 16 December (1994).

THE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

The Annual Flower and Produce Show was again held in the Village Hall in conjunction with the Village Fete. There were 137 entries which were all of a high standard. Alan Wainwright walked off with the most trophies including that of best plot. Our thanks go to the judges, Arthur Story (vegetables), Hilda Taylor (jams, etc), and Ruth Stanton (handicrafts).

The raffle was again most successful and we shall again be making a donation to the CGRA funds. We would like to thank our sponsors:

Bill Needle
Brian Turner
Chairman, HHPC
Gary Owen Club
Hair and Beauty
Newsagent (H)
Robin Hood Hotel
The Pickwick PH
The Saxon PH
The Vineyard
W H Painter Ltd

Anyone interested in a plot should contact me on E.702109

TERRY LIGHT
Secretary

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